

TWO
SERMONS,

BEING A PROPER SEQUEL TO THE TWO
DISCOURSES OR LECTURES,

(LATELY PUBLISHED,)

BEFORE AND AFTER CONFIRMATION AT ST. IVES;

DEDICATED IN GRATITUDE TO THE

MASTER AND FELLOWS OF TRINITY HALL, CAMBRIDGE,
PATRONS OF THE VICARAGE OF HEMINGFORD GREY;

AND TO SIR ROBERT BERNARD, (SON OF THE LATE SIR JOHN
BERNARD, BART.) PATRON OF THE RECTORY OF HEMINGFORD
ABBOTS, HUNTINGDONSHIRE.

By CHARLES DICKENS, LL.D.

Ingratum qui dixerit, omnia dixerit.

Nil dictum, quod non dictum sit, prius.

Printed for the AUTHOR, and sold by T. BLOOM, Printer, St. Ives.

[PRICE ONE SHILLING.]

2 M O N 2

DISCOURSES OR LECTURES

The Reader will correct the following Press Error.

Page 1. Line 1. *for* DISCOURSE I. *read* SERMON I.



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DISCOURSE I.

2d. Epistle of St. PETER, iii. 17.

—BEWARE, LEST YE ALSO, BEING LED AWAY BY THE
ERROR OF THE WICKED, FALL FROM YOUR OWN
STEDFASTNESS!

Dearly Beloved Brethren,

LAST funday I addrest myself to those *chiefly* of our
younger brethren, who had *lately* made profession of
their faith, by openly taking upon *themselves* their *baptis-*
mal vow and covenant; exhorting, and persuading them,
not to be *weary in well-doing*; but to persevere unto the
end, in living *soberly, righteously, and godly*, all their days.

So, from *these words* just read unto you, (*my brethren*),
to the whole congregation *here* present, it shall be the par-
ticular business of the following *little Sermon*, to observe in

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general that it is not only our *duty*, but *greatest interest* likewise, to hold fast the *profession* of our *faith*, without *wavering*; for he is faithful that promised us, (*conditionally*,) *eternal life*; as from the example of such *sinners*, who, have gone before us, to *beware* lest we also being led away by *their errors*, do fall from our *own stedfastness*.

These words, moreover, are all so very plain and easy, that, (as one of the *prophets* upon a like occasion telleth us,) *he* who runs, may read and understand the *full force* of *them*.

Yet, forasmuch as there may possibly be some *among us*, who will not consider *them*, it is our *duty* (as *teachers*,) to *explain them*; to shew the *people* of *their doings*; and by all means in *our power*, to bring them to the knowledge of the *truth*, as it is in *Christ Jesus*, (both *God*, and *man*.)

I shall therefore first, (my *friends*,) briefly consider *them* in order further, the more effectually to persuade *you all* to be *cautious*, not to suffer yourselves to be led away by the error of the *wicked*, neither to fall from your own *stedfastness*, as *christians*.

Know ye then, and observe *diligently*, that the holy apostle, St. Peter, doth not *here* address himself to *those* who are altogether ignorant of, and know not their *duty*; not to *those* who are unacquainted with *religion*, and have no *knowledge* of the *Son of God*, but to *those*, who by *baptism*, and preaching of the *word*, have been initiated into, and made
members

members of his church; nor were *these*, his *hearers*, to whom he wrote this *second epistle*, such only, who were occasionally converted to a *belief* in *Christ*, and might therefore be supposed to be *wavering* and *unsettled* therein; but such as were grounded, and confirmed in the *true faith*; having already arrived to a sufficient degree of *steadfastness* and *resolution*, in the way of *godliness*; on which head, he had nothing to blame *them*, or charge them *with*, only that he would shew his tenderness *towards them*; that *they* should suffer nothing to mislead them, to betray them into error, or bring them into wickedness, by abating their *zeal*, and *constancy* for all *God's laws*.

So that, however *some* among *us*, may think themselves *sufficiently religious*, whilst *they* openly declare themselves servants of *Christ*; yet, unless their *profession* be *sincere*, and *steady*, what proceedeth of *love*, and a *faith unfeigned*, it will avail nothing, but to cause fear, and trembling, and *confusion of face*.

Since, if we only barely enter ourselves into *his service*, and are contented to *profess*, and call ourselves *christians*, without ever troubling ourselves to do *him* service, continually by fulfilling our engagements towards *him*, by following *his steps*, (the *captain* of our *salvation*,) we shall be so far from proving ourselves good *soldiers*, or receiving any *just reward* of our fidelity, our trust and confidence in *Christ Jesus*, that it will be our *greatest misery*, to have be-
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gan well, should we *cease from it*, by suffering ourselves to be *overcome*, to be led away by the deceitfulness of *sin*, and the error of *wicked men*, who like the *devil*, and his vile *associates*, walk about, seeking whom they may thus *ruin*, or *devour*; when, though we would ever so *fain*, yet unless we are *constant* in our *religious exercises*, we shall not die the death of the *righteous*, nor have our *last end* like *his*.

When, if ye allot only, (my beloved *brethren*,) some small portions of your *time*, (the very *longest* ye have, or may have *to live*,) to the *service* of your *Maker*, your *Redeemer*, and your *Sanctifier*, to the *three divine persons* of the ever blessed *trinity*, in *unity*, and are but *slightly* and indifferently *conversant* about *divine truths*, it will avail but little; and in a *religious sense*, be of no good *use* to you, as *christians*, when if ye expect, if ye hope finally to be made happy, ye must make *religion*, your *chiefest*, your *only care*, the most *serious concern* and *business* of your *whole lives*; otherwise, to stop and loiter in your *course*, in the *way* of *godliness*, in the *alone path*, the only safe road to *heaven*, to *salvation*, and *everlasting happiness*, must be your *utter ruin*, and *destruction*; when, although for a time, (may I not further add?) if ye have used yourselves to distribute *liberally*, have given to the *poor*, have *occasionally* fed the *hungry*, clothed the *naked among you*, and have often administered to the *real necessities* of your *brethren*; yet, should
ye

ye once cease *to do good*, should ye shut *your hands*, and re-trench your *charity*, withholding your *mercy and compassion* from the indigent, the wanting, and truly needy ones of every *place*, and of every *country* ye may have heard of, (particularly withholding, or not affording as ye *may be able*, your *humanity* towards the poor *African*, and other *miserable slaves* in our several *colonies abroad*,) though ye do not actually *grind the face* of any *poor neighbour at home*! ye yet thus fall (or *may fall*,) from your *own stedfastness*.

Let me add too, that although ye may have been constant attendants on the *publick worship* of the *church*, and have served *God* day and night, as well at *home* in your *closets*, as in the assemblies of *his people*, in the *congregation* every *Lord's day* at least; yet, if ye *wilfully* absent yourselves from *God's holy temple*, (as the manner of too many is,) or, if ye *cease* every morning and evening to pray in *private*, by not lifting up your *hands and hearts* to *God*, or, if ye but *very seldom* do so, ye, undoubtedly, must be said to have *fallen* from your *stedfastness*.

In short, though ye may have hitherto, for a *long season*, made it your *chief and only business* to live *soberly, righteously, and godly*; yet, if ye will give back, and recede from the *purity* that has been *in you*, and will at all forsake your *first love*; this is to fall from your *own stedfastness*; and with the *sow*, to return back again to your former *filthy practices*.

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These *instances* then, (my *people*,) may surely serve to shew the meaning of the apostle's *caution* to you, and to all mankind, who *profess* and call themselves *christians*, not to fall from *their own stedfastness*. I come now, in the second place, to offer such *substantial* and *convincing reasons*, as may, (I trust,) keep you all *stedfast* in *the faith*, in the form of *sound words*, and in *love*, which is in *Christ Jesus*.

The first *reason* whereof, which I shall urge to *this end*, will be to shew the *pleasure* arising from a *virtuous way* of living; with which, when ye are once thoroughly acquainted, ye will want, (I hope,) no other motive to spur you on, nor any *charm* to bind you, other than what *virtue itself affords*; whose *ways* are ways of *pleasantness*, and all whose paths are *peace*.

Whilst, when ye are to root up *wickedness* indeed, from the *heart*, and to drive out *evil habits* from you, ye are often perplexed *above measure*, and cry out freely, ye are not *able*, not *sufficient* for *these things*; —

— But, when once these *difficulties* are removed, or abated, and ye *recover*, and become *acquainted* with a *better course*; when ye begin to feel the *sweetness* of a *religious life*, and the beauties of *holiness*, ye shall then know it to be your *greatest happiness* to *do good*; and your highest *delight* and *satisfaction* to *persevere in doing it*: —

— So that, to those, (*I trow*,) who do not court their *own ruin*, nor would *willingly* and *industriously* run head-long

long into mischief, the ways of *piety*, of *virtue*, and *religion*, will be always *pleasing*, always *pleasant*, and *delightful*.

Another grand motive to perseverance in *well-doing*, are the *advantages* which await the due performance of our *duty*, as men, and *christians*; and the *blessing* which attends it, a crown of *glory*, and eternal felicity in *heaven*, where a *thousand years* are as *one day*, and *one day* as a *thousand years*; where at *God's right hand* there are *rivers of pleasures* for evermore.

But the life, verily, of a *christian*, (as we read from *scripture*,) is yet compared to a *fight* or *combat*, and oftentimes to a *race*: I have fought a *good fight*, saith St. Paul; I have finished my *course*; I have kept *the faith*: all which *phrases*, or *forms* of speaking, are *synonymous*, and only differently express the *same thing*.

Wherefore, as in *combats*, it is not he that strikes a *few blows*, and after turns his back upon *the enemy*; but he whose settled courage and resolution goes on to *conquer*, and *overcome him*, that wins *the field*; and, as in *races*, it is not he that sets out briskly, and tires in *the course*; but he who continues *stedfast* unto the end, that wins *the prize*; so, in our *christian warfare*, and race of *godliness*, it is he that endureth unto the end, *and he only*, that shall *be saved*, that shall receive the crown of *righteousness*, which the *Lord*, (the righteous Judge,) shall give unto him in *that day*, when the secrets of *all hearts* shall be *disclosed*; and
he

he shall meet with that happy *eulogium*, spoken to the righteous, of, Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!

To this *christian constancy* alone it is, we must surely believe that all the gracious promises of happiness in the *gospel* are made unto us; but unless ye and I, and all others of *this household of faith*, continue steadfast unto the end, neither may we, (any of us,) hope to be saved: —

— We are assured indeed (every one of us,) of a reward of our labour; that it shall not be in vain in the Lord: we are told also that *they* who came in only at the *eleventh hour*, did yet receive every one *his penny*; because, doubtless, they were diligent to do the work of *him*, of that equal, just, and fair Lord, who had sent them into his vineyard; so that if we continue steadfast, if we persevere, and endure faithfully unto the end, so long as *our moon endureth*, we need not fear what *man can do unto us*; since, we shall all verily *be saved*, to have an entrance opened unto us finally into *God's kingdom*, however late too many of us may have begun to do *justice*, to love *mercy*, and walk humbly with *our God*: —

— But if we do not, better had it been for *all professed christians* among us, never to have entered upon a *religious course*, than after they have begun well, to desert *their profession*; to run from Christ, to leave *him*, to flee from *him*, and forsake *him*; when, know ye all this, (my brethren

thren,) if ye continue in your *sins*, only because ye know not what to do, and are unacquainted with your *duty*, as *christians*, and are ignorant of the ways of *virtue*, ye may yet find an excuse for *invincible ignorance*; (but not otherwise;) whilst those among us, who have been once enlightened, should *they* fall, should *they* apostatize, should *they* desert their calling as *christian teachers*, and *preachers* especially, it must be very difficult (*we all know*) if not *impossible* to renew *such* again unto *repentance*, not to be repented of; when, if such *Friends*, (as *one* very lately has done,) will continue to *leave us*, to *forsake us*, to deny the *Holy One*, and the *Just*; they can be no *friends*, surely to their *own souls*: for whosoever, *saith the blessed Jesus*, shall deny *me* before *men*, *him* will I also deny before *my Father* which is *in heaven*.

Ye see then, (*my people*,) there are scarce *any*, yea there can be no *hopes*, verily, of any *such of our brethren* ever returning, without especial divine grace, to do *God's will*, at *any time*; and, what marvel? since by their neglecting to persevere in *well-doing*, they abuse and vilify the *grace of God*, and turn it into wantonness, by suffering the *wicked one* to have dominion over them, to influence them, to possess them: when, every transgression they commit, after they have been taught their *duty*, (or have taught it *to others*,) is a *presumptuous one*; insomuch that it is committed against the *strongest*, the *clearest evidence*, both of *reason* and *con-*

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science; and must be the *effect* oftentimes, both of *thought* and *deliberation*, that they then do *wickedly*; that they chuse the *bad* in preference to the *good*.

When, as an *apostle* hath said, (and as I have already quoted,) it is *impossible*, verily, to renew *such* again unto *repentance*; because they thus crucify to themselves the *Son of God* afresh, and put *him* to an *open shame*; that is, though they are convinced of *his divinity*, and believe *him* to be *God*, the true *Messiah*, (the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*,) they yet have as little regard for *him*, (it seems,) as the very *Jews themselves* had, disobeying his *laws*, and trampling underfoot his *religion*; (*all things* that are written of *him* both in the *Old and New Testament*.) —

— But what is the greatest unhappiness of *all*; those, who have thus fallen from their *steadfastness*, the *former good actions* they may have done, will *condemn them*, and add to their misery, if not *here*, in the *world to come*, where we shall every one receive for the things done in the *body*, whether they be *good*, or whether they be *evil*; when it will be in vain to say, We have *formerly* endured the *fight of christianity*; have undergone the loss of *friends*, and *estates*; have been *mocked*, *scourged*, and *imprisoned* for the name of *Christ*; have been *men of sorrows*, and acquainted with *grief*; unless we go on as we began in *baptism*, by *confirmation* or *otherwise*, and continue *steadfast*, *immoveable*, always abounding in the *work of the Lord*,
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(both *God* and *man*;) otherwise we shall surely forfeit all our pretensions to *happiness*; whose latter end, (not like *Job's*,) must be *worse* than our *beginning*; when, by this *mean too*, we unavoidably seek our own *ruin*, our own *destruction*, by pulling down so foolishly, and obstinately the *mischief* upon *our own pates*. So that as the *devil*, the *world*, and the *flesh*, verily, are all against us, to *prove us*, to *try us*, and too often *overcome many of us*, let us (*my friends*,) from this very hour, *play the men*, and be *christians* in deed; and if we think *we stand*, let us *all*, (as well *preachers*, as *bearers*,) take heed lest we fall into the *pit of misery*, where their *worm* dieth not, and the *fire* is not *quenched*: for unless, we are ever upon *our guard*, and keep a *good look out*, the three worst enemies we have, (the *devil*, the *world*, and the *flesh*,) will not fail to *draw us*, to *enveigle us*, and *tempt us* into *sin*; against which, be assured nothing can better arm or secure *every christian*, than the *shield of faith*, and frequent exercises of *religion*, especially, the more *solemn* and *public acts* of it; which will be so *pleasing*, as well as prevalent with *those* who have a right *understanding* in the way of *godliness*, that the more any of us *uniformly* labour *therein*, the less weary *we shall be*; when *they* will add *vigour* to our *undertakings*, and fresh life to our *steadfastness*; causing us to do the whole will of *our Father* which is in *heaven*; and to run *our christian race* with

with joy: wherefore, (and I again repeat it,) if ye now stand, take heed, (my beloved brethren) lest ye fall!

To which good end, the most effectual mean ye, (or I,) can possibly make use of, is to pray in private as well as public; to beseech and beg of God to assist us with his holy spirit; and give us of his grace, to resist every temptation of the world, the flesh, and the devil, who are all against us, to deceive us, to betray us, to ruin us: yet, trust ye in the Lord Jehovah; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength: and if God be for us, who shall be against us, to hurt us, to abase us, to terrify us?

To whom, with the Son and holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, for ever, and ever! Amen.

SERMON

S E R M O N II.



S E R M O N II.

I st. Epistle of St. PAUL to the Corinthians, x. 12.

— LET HIM THAT THINKETH HE STANDETH, TAKE
HEED LEST HE FALL.

Men and Brethren,

I HAVE lately preached to you, that the *victory* that
overcometh the *world* is *our faith*; that when we have
put our hands to the *plough*, we must not *look back*; that
we should *beware* not to fall from our own *steadfastness*: —

— And now, as this *portion* of scripture admonishes us,
if we, (any of us,) think we stand, let us take heed lest
we fall.

St. Paul, the author of this *epistle*, doth in this *chapter*,
from whence *my text* is taken, refer his *hearers* and *con-*
verts, the *Corinthians*, to the histories of *former ages*, which
are

are recorded as a standing *warning*, or *memento*, to *posterity*! that they rely not so much upon any external advantages, as to neglect recommending themselves in all things to *God*, by holding fast the profession of the *true faith* without *wavering*; since the *greatest privileges* cannot recommend *us* without *holiness* unto *him*, of whom cometh our *help*; that it is not any *external relation* we bear to *Christ*, as being *baptized*, *confirmed*, or even receiving the *sacrament*, that will ever *save us*; but our acting suitably to our calling, as *christians*; that, therefore, it becometh *us* to take heed, (whilst we are dreaming of the great felicities of *our state*, of our being *members* of *his body*, of *his flesh*, and of *his bones*,) lest we be surprized into *ruin* and *destruction*: that, considering how very apt the *world* is to ascribe *less* to *Christ's* merits and sufferings, to the forbearance of a merciful and gracious *Creator*, than to its own *smaller ones*, the *apostle*, out of mere *love* and *charity* to them, *forewarns* them not to stop *here*, lest they be deceived.

His caution *to them* is *this*; Let him that thinketh he *standeth*, take heed lest he fall!

Wherein are observable; *first*, the persons to whom he writeth; *secondly*, his address *to them*; and *lastly*, the caution *inferred*; take *heed* lest *ye fall*.

When the manifest danger there is of *so doing*, will best appear from former examples, *before* and *after* the establishment

blishment of *christianity*: before Christ's mission and appearance, the greatest part of the *world* fell from the *belief* of the *existence* of the Deity, into gross *superstition* and *idolatry*; and since *that time*, what numbers do we read of that forsook the true faith; that struck in with the various *heresies* of the times! that amongst *those* who have *foolishly* gone out of *the way*, (to say nothing of the *famous schism* that happened before *Christ*, betwixt the *Jews* and *Samaritans*; nor yet to insist upon the lamentable *schism* that broke out since *our Saviour's* time, betwixt the *christians* of the eastern and western *churches*, about the observation of *Easter*,) we have so many, and *those* so notorious, even at *this hour*, that as it is *impossible*, so it is *unnecessary*, to make particular mention of *them*: —

— Yet, what are all *these* to the sad *instances* of men, who have deserted a *religious life*? pretended *christians*, and professed *infidels*; myriads of *all ages* and *countries*, of *all ranks* and *stations*, conspiring in the neglect of *virtue* and *religion*; and in the practice of *those things* that are contrary to the laws of *God* and of *nature*! whilst, to give some account of the *matter* why *things* are so, under the *present dispensation* of *christianity*, and to shew how the *danger* of *falling* becomes so *great* and *general*, I shall consider the *nature* of *christianity*, and the *professors* of it: when, as to the *religion* itself; it must be confessed, there are many things in the *doctrinal* part thereof, deep and unsearchable;

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what no human reason can find out, or discover: such for instance, is the *trinity*, the *incarnation* of the *blessed Jesus*, his *resurrection* and the *descent* of the *holy ghost*.

When, if *God's* having revealed and declared these *divine truths* to us, be not always kept in *view*, and reverently *considered*, the very wisest of men *among us*, maybe soon lost and bewildered in their *contemplation*, their reasonings *about them*; and at last, sit down *weary* and *dissatisfied* as to *these things*.

So, if men do not strictly attend to *divine authority*, to the *sanctions* of *eternal rewards* and *punishments*, that are annexed to the performance or omission of their *duty*, there will be great *danger* of neglecting it: —

— The *positive* precepts of the *gospel*, have not to recommend *them*, but *God's* promise and institution! so that, human reason itself, could never have *discovered* that they are means for *those ends*, for which they were *appointed*: such, for instance, are the two *sacraments*, the institution of the *christian priesthood*; and the whole method of *salvation*, established by *Jesus Christ*: —

— As to the moral precepts of *our duty*; of loving *God* with all our heart, and our *neighbour* as *ourselves*; having contentment and resignation to the *divine will*; endeavouring to be *perfect*, as he is perfect; of taking up the cross of *Christ*; of mortifying our *lusts* and *passions*; rejoicing in *tribulation*, and forbearing all manner

manner of *revenge*; of doing good to *those* that hate us, and praying for our *worst enemies*. These are *rules* so much above the reach and power of our *reason* and *understanding*, that they must surely be ascribed to *God alone*; who is infinite in *wisdom*; but hath ordained *them* to be observed of us men, for *our salvation*: neither should we have known *them*, had not the *Almighty God* been pleased to reveal *them*, to appoint *them*, and to ordain *them*.

We, verily, (my *friends*,) are most of us, at best, but too apt to mistake *good* for *evil*, and *evil* for *good*; not knowing or considering, that it is the *devil* leads us on to judge falsely; to walk too often in the way that tendeth to *destruction*; as he did our *first parents*, (*Adam* and *Eve*,) in *Paradise*; and the body of the *Israelites* in *Horeb*, who, to this day, are gross *idolaters*, *aliens* and *strangers* to the *true God*, and *his Son*, *Christ Jesus*, the *Lord* of life, and glory, now our *Advocate* in the highest *heavens*.

Moreover, the *world* flatters and promises many *fine things*, to inveigle us into *sin*, and estrange our minds from the *living God*; causing *divisions* and *heresies* among us, to the distracting of the *church*, and deserting the right *faith* of *Christ*, through *Socinianism*, *Arianism*, and still, little less abominable, *Unitarianism*, even in our seats of *learning* and *education*; and, what should be more so of *true religion*, than of artificial *knowledge*, and over-powering *philosophy*, hardly ever satisfied to trust or believe any thing, if *above*,
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though not contrary to man's best *reason* or understanding, when there are many *other ways* too, whereby we may be drawn aside from our *duty*, to follow the *multitude*, to do *evil*; as, by our own *lusts* and *passions*, and the error of *the wicked*, who daily lay in wait to deceive *us*, to betray *us*, to undo *us*, and to ruin *us*: so that in *one word*, as well as *many*, I must beg leave to say *again*, (with the *apostle*,) Let *him* that thinketh he *standeth*, take *especial heed*, (in *all places*,) lest he *fall*; (which, ye may *all* however do, (*my hearers*,) if it be not your *own fault*, your *own naughtiness*, in seeking out, and *propagating* too many hurtful inventions to *unhinge*, and *unsettle* the *unity* and *peace* that should be, and for ever remain *firm*, and *stedfast*, in all good *christians*;) for, although the danger of *falling* be *great*; and *many* have, and do, and shall fall, probably, from *good* to *evil*, and desert their *religion*, (their *christian calling*,) yet, the *possibility* of standing, and persevering in the *true faith*, is no less *certain*, as will appear, (*I trust*,) from the examples of *those* who have gone before *us*; who have resisted the greatest *temptations*, and have stood *firm* to their *latter end*.

Amongst *these* were *Moses*, the *Maccabees*, and other *Jews*, and good men, who lived before *Christ* came into the *world*; as, the *apostles* and *primitive martyrs* who came or lived after *Christ*.

The story of the *meekest man*, *Moses*, all good *christians* must be well acquainted with; how that he came into the
world

world at a time when a certain cruel and bloody-minded king had ordained all the *males* of the *Hebrew* children to be put to *death*; that he was concealed in his *father's* house for three *months*; that he was put into an *ark* of *bull-rushes*, and laid among the *flags* of the river *Nile*, to escape the king's *tyranny*, till, (by the *providence of God*,) he was found by *Pharaoh's* daughter, who took him up, had compassion on him, and sent for his *own* mother to nurse him, and suckle him; and when he was *grown up*, she brought him to the *princess*, who adopted him for her *own* son, gave him the best *education* of the *country*, and intended him to be the *heir* of her father's *kingdom of Egypt*.

But forasmuch as he saw the absurdities of the Egyptian manner of *worship*, he rejected the tempting offer of being a *king*, and chose rather to suffer *affliction* with the people of *God*, than to enjoy the pleasures of *sin* for a *season*.

Thus the *Maccabees* too stood firm in the *true faith*; nor could be tempted to go aside from their *religion*. *Eleazer* likewise, and the *mother* with her *seven sons*, were not less courageous for the *honour* and *glory* of *God*, than *Shadrach*, *Mesbach*, and *Abed-nego*:

We might mention *others too*, (of *old*,) who for the sake of *God's* *holy religion*, were bound, and imprisoned! were stoned, were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins; were *destitute*, *afflicted*, *tormented*, who yet pre-

served their *integrity*, by resolutely *persevering* in the profession of the *despised* and *persecuted truth* :

When, if we pass by *these*, we shall, moreover, find a most *noble army* too, of *christian martyrs*, since the preaching of the *gospel* in *all lands*, who were proof against the bitterest persecutions and sufferings, that *human cruelty* could inflict or inspire, or the *wit* and *invention*, the naughtiest invention of the *hardest tyrants* find out, to impose upon mankind *under them*, or subject *unto them* : —

— So, were we to insist upon the several examples of obedience to the *laws* and *ordinances* of the *Almighty*, which we meet with in the *scriptures*, of good and pious *persons*, who gave undeniable *proofs* of their trust in *providence*, who demonstrated the power of *godliness* in their *hearts* and *souls*, by frequent instances of beneficence towards *their brethren*, we might run over, and should run over a very large part or portion of the *sacred writing*, both in the *Old*, as well as *New Testament* ; and present you only with *such* probably, as few (I trust) who hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the word of God, but must remember, if they *love the scriptures*, and are as conversant *in them*, as the late celebrated *Joshua Barnes* (of *happy memory*) was, who is recorded to *this day* upon his *monument*, (for your imitation,) to have read over a small *English Bible*, (his usual *pocket companion*,) one hundred and twenty one times, at his *leisure hours*.

Let

Let us leave however, *these examples*, and consider how evidently this truth appears, from the *reason* and *nature* of the thing: —

— First then, as to the principles and grounds of *religion*, they, being *all* of them consistent with those of our *own reason*, recommend themselves to *those* of the *largest knowledge* and understandings: when, what nation is there so great, (as said *a prophet*,) that hath *statutes* and *judgements* so *righteous* as all the *law* of *God*, which is set before *us this day*? so that those, *our christian brethren*, (as well as you and I, *my usual bearers here*, in *this house of prayer* and *thanksgiving*,) though possessed of the most *profound* and *superior* human *knowledge*, must, or should as soon yield to the proofs of christianity, (which ye profess to *believe*, and *confide* in,) as those of inferior *knowledge*, who have been bred only in the lower class of the school of *reason* and *understanding* among the *multitude*, who mostly indeed, in *old time*, flocked *unto Christ*, to hear *him*, to see *him*, and to learn of *him* the *true* and only road to *salvation* and *happiness*, in the kingdom of *heaven*. Many too, of the *primitive fathers*, (who were not less learned than the great men of *Rome*, or *Athens*,) were its strenuous *advocates*; and espoused it to *the death*.

So that an observation or two more, (*my friends*,) will be sufficient, will be enough at one time, probably, to work upon *you*, to make you know and feel, what alone
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it is, ye must *all believe*, and *do* as *christians*, if ye really *hope* to be *saved*; or if ye think ye stand, to take heed not to fall from your *own steadfastness*, by forsaking or deserting that religion, under which ye were *born*, which ye were *baptized in*, and further *entered upon*, by the just *mean* of *confirmation*: —

— Know ye then, that it is as possible for *you*, for *me*, and for every one of this *household*, of this our *established* and *holy catholic church*, to hold the *faith* in the *unity* of the *spirit*, in the bond of *peace*, and in righteousness of *life*, as our *forefathers* have done: to be convinced whereof, ye need only consider the nature of *christian virtue*, which consists in bearing *one loss* or pain to escape a *greater*; or foregoing *one interest* or pleasure to secure a *better*; and this, doubtless, out of reverence and obedience to the law of the *Lord*, that requires it, and commands it of *us* his people, who shall not then greatly err in our hearts, if we have known *his ways*, and will endeavour faithfully to keep *his commandments*; the which, although of ourselves, we cannot, may not be able to do by reason of insufficiency in *us*; yet, by the grace of *God*, and his help, *we* may: for it is *he* that worketh in *us* both to *will*, and to *do*, of his *good pleasure*.

Would ye not then be troubled, would ye not have your minds uneasy, nor your consciences tormented with over much fear and jealousy, of finally becoming *castaways*, or
of

of not dying the death of the *righteous*, to have your last end *like his*; let me further beseech you (*my beloved brethren,*) now, and evermore, to do your *duty*, as good *christians*, with a *willing mind*, with *sincerity*, without *partiality*, and without *hypocrisy*: and because *God* hath graciously afforded and appointed clearly, the *means* for salvation, (in our church,) let us not frustrate his good design in bringing, and drawing us *christians* to *himself*; but fulfil his laws, and walk in his commandments, to keep them, and to do them, all *our days*, till we go hence, and are no more *seen*; when the *trumpet* shall sound, and the dead shall be raised *incorruptible*, and *we* shall be changed.

Moreover now, more especially *while the time is*, may *we* not neglect to obey faithfully the *Son of God*, who came into the world for the redemption of *sinners*; who gave it in charge to his *disciples* when he was about to leave *them*, to do *this* in remembrance of *him*, their *Deliverer*, and *only Saviour*.

Wherefore, have we any real *love* for our *Redeemer*, who so loved *us*, as to lay down his *life* for *us*, and for all *man-kind*? if we have any compassion for our own precious *souls*, and are desirous *they* should be *saved*, let us not (I entreat you,) at any time, wilfully neglect to do our *duty* in every part of *divine worship*, towards God's holy temple; particularly in becoming partakers of the *body and blood of Christ* in the *sacrament*; where, if we do truly and earnestly

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repent

repent us of *our sins*, and are in love and charity with *our neighbours*, (but *not otherwise*,) we shall be received, (as the repenting *prodigal* in the *gospel*,) with *joy*: —

— Knowing this, that as a *father* pitieth his *own children*, even so is the *Lord* merciful unto all them that come unto *him*, through the merits and satisfaction of his dearly beloved *Son, Christ Jesus, our Lord*.

To whom be all *honour* and *glory*, world without end!
Amen.

12 MR 58

Unicuique

Unicuique Viro.

DISCITUR in Sacris, Christum dixisse roganti
 Thomæ, quorsum iret? (Littera scripta manet,)

Sum via, sum verax, sum vitæque sola virorum,

Qui me cunque petunt, qui mea verba tenent:

Dixit — et addebat dictis simul, hæcce Philippo;

Quisquis me vidit, vidit et iste patrem.

Hoc satis est, fateor; Christus de Virgine natus,

Non est solus homo; sed Deus ipse patet.

Deleo abhinc omnes ex animo meo, UNITARIOS!

C. D. LL.D.

Quippe olim bene notus homo, mihi fudit in aurem —
 Si Christum discis — satis est, si cætera nescis:
 Si Christum nescis — nihil est, si cætera discis.

*Who hath believed our report? Isai. liii.
 Who is on our side, who?*

O GOD of Heaven, of Earth, and sea —
 Who ever was, and e'er shall be;
 Grant the whole Race of human Kind,
 Who mercy need — may mercy find!

Grant

Grant they may know, believe, and trust
 That only holy One, and Just;
 That only Son of *thine*, (*our Lord* —)
 Who from Beginning, was the word;
 Who said *himself*, (*avant all strife!*)
 I am the *Way*, the *Truth*, the *Life*:
 So that, though Priestley *will dispute*;
 Thinks, Horne and Horfeley *to confute*;
 He'll find it hard, whoever kicks
 (**A modern Saul* —) against the Pricks.
 Yet, is he right? let's see, let's look!
 And, if he be — e'en burn the Book;
 Kat' *'exochéen*, that book of *Life*;
 (How hard!) *the cause of all this strife*.

Cease then, O cease, return and see
 The Son of God's *Divinity*!
 Priestley, return! Thou'rt gone astray;
 Whilst Horne and Horfeley, point the *Way*,
 The *Truth*, the *Life*; (the *God-man*, Jesus;)
 But Unitarians, love to *tease us*.

I have done: liberavi animam.

12 MR 58

C. D. LL. D.

* Acts ix.



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